

Minutes
PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD
September 26, 1978

The Parks and Recreation Board met for its regular meeting at 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, September 26, 1978, at the Austin Parks and Recreation Department. Present were Mr. Garrison, Chairman; Mr. Hall, Vice Chairman; Mr. Bray, Secretary; and members Mrs. Arnold, Mr. Britton, Mr. Coffee, Mrs. Isely, Mr. Nalle, Mr. Rose, Mr. Shaw and Ms. Stockard. There were no members absent. Members Emeritus absent were Mr. Coates and Mrs. Crenshaw. Staff members present were Mike Segrest, Roy Guerrero, John Hughes, Dorothy Nan McLean, Randy Russell, Dan Wilson, Linda Tyler and Louise Nivison. Visitors included Edward Rendon, Marcus DeLeon, Hortensia Palomares, Mary Muniz, Pete Martinez and Paul Hernandez from the East Town Lake Citizens Association; Mrs. Bill Nalle and Mr. Bo Byers.

The meeting was called to order at 7:32 p.m., by Mr. Garrison, Chairman.

Mr. Garrison welcomed Mrs. Mary Arnold to the Board.

Mr. Garrison asked for approval of the minutes of August 22 and September 11, 1978. It was moved by Mrs. Isely and seconded by Ms. Stockard that the minutes be approved as printed. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Garrison recognized Mr. Roy Guerrero and presented him with the Koger Stokes Award, the highest award that could be received from the Texas Amateur Athletics Association.

FESTIVAL BEACH ON TOWN LAKE

Under Citizens Communications, Mr. Edward Rendon was present. He is president of the East Town Lake Citizens Association. Mr. Rendon asked Ms. Palomares to speak for the group. Ms. Palomares stated that they were present to secure the endorsement from the Parks and Recreation Board of the following improvements by priority:

1. The construction of a fishing pier 200 feet long, off the north bank of Festival Beach.

This pier would be in the area where the existing dock and bleachers are presently located. Ms. Stockard asked why this particular area was chosen. Mr. DeLeon stated that it was the widest part of the lake and would give better access for fishermen.

2. Additional trees, picnic tables, barbeque pits and shrubbery.

A total of 180 additional trees were planned; 45 concrete picnic tables; 90 barbeque pits (2 per table); and flowering shrubbery along the waterfront.

3. Rest rooms were badly needed. They proposed two sides -- men and women -- and being able to accommodate 6 people at one time. At present there were no rest rooms available in the area other

than the ones at the Fire Marshall's Building and they were not open on the weekends.

4. Amphitheatre. An amphitheatre is proposed to meet the cultural and artistic growth the City of Austin has been experiencing. An amphitheatre would provide a place and opportunity for the expression of all creative talents, as well as, recreational and social interaction. The length would be 80 feet and it would be designed similar to the amphitheatre at Pan American Recreation Center.
5. Irrigation System. An irrigation system is proposed to maintain the existing vegetation, as well as, the proposed additional vegetation.
6. Children's Playground. A playscape is needed on Festival Beach since the proposed park is designed for family enjoyment. The playscape would be 100' to 175' from the shoreline and would be similar in design to that of the children's playground at Martin Junior High School.
7. Other priorities included the additional need for lighting, drinking fountains, the examination of needed parking space and open areas, and the revision of any foreseen future needs expressed by the community.

Mr. Segrest explained there were 79 acres in the area. Mr. Bray asked how long ago did the committee start on the plans. Mr. DeLeon stated that it had taken about one month. There were six people on the Planning Committee of the Association and they all lived within three blocks of the area. They now had 55 members in the Association. They felt it was a good plan and was a result of what could be produced when you pull the neighborhood together. They realized they could not achieve everything in one year but they felt it was a good comprehensive neighborhood plan. Mr. Garrison asked if they had worked with the Parks and Recreation Department. Mr. Segrest stated that they had worked with the group and the City Council had just approved \$60,000 in the 1978-1979 Capital Improvements Program for improvements to Festival Beach. A 200 foot long fishing pier would cost approximately \$96,000 and the Engineering Department has expressed the opinion that such a pier would not be feasible. The Engineering Department has also expressed the opinion that the Corps of Engineers would not approve such a pier due to obstruction to the flow of water. An alternative would be to build the pier along the shoreline. A total of \$15,000 was presently allocated for trees in the Town Lake Beautification Project. Trees would cost from \$70 to \$90 each and an amphitheatre would cost approximately \$100,000. Irrigation would cost around \$75,000; a playscape similar to the one in Zilker Park approximately \$75,000; and a unisex rest room would be from \$20,000 to \$30,000. Ms. Stockard stated that in view of the fact that only \$60,000 had been allocated by the City Council, that the Association work with the staff and come back with a more feasible plan. There was further discussion. It was moved by Mr. Bray that the Parks and Recreation Board recommend that the East Town Lake Citizens Association work with the Parks and Recreation Department staff on a revised plan and present this plan at the October 24th meeting. Mr. Bray stated that the Association was to be commended

for such a fine job. Mr. Garrison thanked the group for appearing before the Board.

TENNIS

Mr. Garrison asked Mr. Bo Byers if he would like to speak. Mr. Byers stated that he would like to congratulate the Board and thank each member for the strong support they gave to their recommendation for a 16-court tennis center to be funded by the City for construction in 1979. The City Council approved \$700,000 for such a center, at a site to be determined later, for construction to begin next year. He did not believe \$700,000 would be enough to build 16 courts and provide the pro shop, locker room facilities, center court stadium and practice backboard that should accompany such a center. He hoped that the Board and the Parks and Recreation Department staff will not only work very hard for passage of the bond issue to finance this project but also will assist in the effort to locate additional funding for assuring a complete, first-class center. He would estimate that \$300,000 to \$400,000 additional financing will be necessary. Another matter that he would like to see the Board address soon is that of seeking equity in the matter of fees charged tennis players for reserved courts. He was speaking of equity between the four major activities for which charges are made -- golf, softball, swimming and tennis. Last year the Parks and Recreation Department staff analysis showed the City's operational cost was four times greater for golf than for tennis on a per-participant hour basis. Softball cost the City three times more than tennis, and swimming cost twice as much as tennis. A similar analysis of golf and tennis only was submitted informally this year and the cost of golf was 30 cents per-participant hour, compared with 7 cents per hour for tennis. On behalf of the Capital Area Tennis Association, he would like to request the Board and the Parks and Recreation Department study the desirability of adjusting charges so that there is direct equity between the charges for all four sports. Also, a Junior Development Program, cosponsored by the Capital Area Tennis Association and the Parks and Recreation Department, has been initiated at Caswell and Pharr Tennis Centers, with 18 children at each center participating in professional instruction, practice and peer competition each Saturday from 8:00-9:30 a.m. The cost to each child for the 13-week program, September 16-December 16, is \$10. The Capital Area Tennis Association is providing the tennis balls, paying for the court use fees and subsidizing the cost of the professional instruction - by the head pro and an assistant at each center. He would also like to report that the Tennis Advisory Board hopes to have a recommendation for the Parks and Recreation Board consideration in October concerning a policy for use of courts at Caswell and Pharr Tennis Centers by organized tennis groups. Mr. Garrison thanked Mr. Byers.

ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

Mr. Garrison asked for items from Board members. Mr. Britton stated that he was concerned about the youth programs in East Austin. He oped that a satisfactory arrangement could be made between the Austin Independent School District and the City of Austin, so that the children would not suffer as far as their programs were concerned. Mr. Coffee asked about something that he had read about mis-appropriation of funds in the Parks and Recreation Department. Mr. Segrest stated that a former employee had allegedly embezzled monies from the Trust and Agency accounts and will come up very soon for trial. The

employee had transferred to the Tax Department before the missing funds were discovered.

DRAFT SUBDIVISION ORDINANCE

The next item on the agenda was consideration of the Draft Subdivision Ordinance. Mr. Garrison stated that other cities over the country had such an ordinance and it has proved to be very successful. The draft ordinance was introduced by the City Planning Department. The ordinance would provide for mandatory dedication of property for park purposes for any new subdivision. After further discussion, it was moved by Mr. Rose and seconded by Mr. Nalle that Mr. Bray and Mrs. Arnold serve as a committee to meet with the Planning Commission and report back to the Board. The motion carried unanimously.

PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD ANNUAL REPORT

The next item on the agenda was consideration of approval of the Parks and Recreation Board annual report. After discussion, it was moved by Mr. Bray and seconded by Mr. Rose that the Parks and Recreation Board annual report to the Mayor and City Council be approved as printed in the agenda. The motion carried unanimously.

WATER SKI LIFT PROJECT

Mr. Segrest stated that the Water Ski Lift Project had been placed on the October 5th City Council meeting. The City Council had been concerned about the Fiesta Gardens lagoon area and the Parks and Recreation Department had reviewed an alternate site at Lakeshore Drive and Pleasant Valley Road on Town Lake, which appeared to be a feasible location. The trap and skeet request and the radio control plane request for Lake Long were also scheduled for October 5th.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM QUARTERLY REPORT

Mr. Segrest stated that the quarterly progress report for April-June for the Capital Improvements Program was for information. The City Council did accept the recommendation of the Parks and Recreation Board concerning the 1978-1983 recommended Capital Improvements Program. Mr. Bray stated that the Parks and Recreation Department staff should be commended for all their work on the Capital Improvements Program.

OPERATING BUDGET

Mr. Segrest stated that the operating budget had been cut approximately \$800,000. The aquatic weed harvesting program had been reduced; the park maintenance cut from an 8 day mowing frequency to a 13 day frequency; the opening of the Northwest Recreation Center delayed to October 1, 1979; the brush removal service eliminated; the Community School funding reduced; and the funding for seasonal employees reduced. The primary impact was in the maintenance area and seasonal employees for swimming pools, recreation centers and playgrounds. Mrs. Arnold asked if other funding was available for seasonal. Mr. Segrest stated the only funds would be for contract classes. He wanted the Board to be aware of what was happening concerning the operating budget. He would bring to the Board a report on exactly how the budget was affected at the next meeting. There was further discussion.

AUSTIN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Mrs. Arnold asked about the City of Austin and the Austin Independent School District agreement on the use of school facilities. Mr. Segrest stated that they had not met again to date but, hopefully something could be worked out soon. Mr. Garrison stated that it might be well for the Board members to independently contact School Board members. There was further discussion.

Mr. Garrison thanked Mike Segrest for doing such a fine job as Acting Director and for carrying through in such a difficult time.

The meeting adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

Minutes
PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD
October 9, 1978

The Parks and Recreation Board met for its regular meeting at 12:00 noon, Monday, October 9, 1978, at the Parks and Recreation Department. Present were Mr. Garrison, Chairman; Mr. Hall, Vice Chairman; Mr. Bray, Secretary; and members Mr. Britton, Mrs. Isely, Mr. Nalle, Mr. Shaw and Ms. Stockard. Members absent were Mrs. Arnold, Mr. Coffee, and Mr. Rose. Member Emeritus present was Mr. Coates and Member Emeritus absent was Mrs. Crenshaw. Staff members present were Leonard Ehrler, Mike Segrest, Roy Guerrero, and Louise Nivison.

The meeting was called to order at 12:25 p.m., by Mr. Garrison, Chairman.

Mr. Garrison introduced Mr. Leonard Ehrler, Director of the Parks and Recreation Department.

Mr. Ehrler stated that he wanted to visit informally with the Board and he had been relying very heavily on Mike Segrest and Roy Guerrero. He came to Austin from Boulder, Colorado, a very lovely city, but he could not progress professionally there.

Mr. Ehrler stated that he had asked for and received, an audience with Mr. Dan Davidson, City Manager; Mr. Jack Davidson, Superintendent of the Austin Independent School District and others, concerning the fees to be charged for use of school facilities by the Parks and Recreation Department. He would report on this subject at a later meeting. Hopefully, a realistic fee structure could be realized.

Mr. Ehrler stated that the City Council had cut taxes 28% and he was supportive of the cutting of taxes and it was happening all over the nation. In making tax cuts it had a direct affect on the Parks and Recreation Department programs. One of the changes was moving from an 8 day mowing cycle (business days) to a 13 day mowing cycle. As a result of the change they would end up cutting roots and losing 50% to 60% of the nitrogen and would give the park areas an unkept appearance. Mike Segrest stated that he had personally talked to Mayor McClellan and the City Council members were also aware of the problem.

Mr. Ehrler stated that another problem was part-time salaries. In making reductions in seasonal salaries it was affecting the Parks and Recreation Department more than any other department. He felt the administration would allow the department flexibility in determining where the changes should be made within the budget. The total budget cuts amounted to \$750,000.

Mr. Ehrler stated that there were two vacancies in the department, one in the Administrative Section and one in the Planning Section, but he did not feel they needed to be filled at the present time. He was very dependent on his staff and he had a good team. He has found a great deal of talent in the staff. At present the staff is working on written policies for the department and he felt they were very important. Parks and Recreation Boards were a vital liaison with the public. His door was always open and he would welcome any of the board members at any time they would like to visit with him.

The meeting adjourned at 12:55 p.m.